

A NEW SPECIES OF URODISCELLA (ACARINA, UROPODIDAE) FROM AUSTRALIA

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Fig. 1

SYNOPSIS

The myrmecophilous genus *Urodiscella* Berlese 1903 is recorded for the first time from Australia. It is represented by the new species *Urodiscella nitida* sp. nov. described from a single female found on the larva of an ant *Myrmecia gulosa* Fabr. from Carlton, New South Wales.

A key to the known species of the genus, four from England and Europe and one from South Africa, besides the new species is given.

All the species with the possible exception of the South African one are myrmecophilous in habit.

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Urodiscella* was erected by Berlese (1903b) for *Uropoda ricasoliana* Berl. 1889, *Uropoda philoctena* Trouessart 1902 and *Urodiscella alophora* n. sp. with *ricasoliana* as the genotype, all of which are associated with ants. All three species were figured in Berlese 1903c.

In 1918 Hull added a fourth species *U. signata* n. sp. from England, also myrmecophilous in habit.

More recently a fifth species has been described by Ryke (1958) from South Africa but this species was found in straw and not therefore definitely associated with ants.

Brief keys to the earlier species were published first by Berlese (1903b, c) and then Hull (1918). Ryke did not attempt to key his species. The brief descriptions of Berlese and Hull make their keys difficult to assess, but a tentative key to all the five known species is here attempted based on those of Berlese and Hull.

KEY TO THE SPECIES OF URODISCELLA

1. Dorsal setae strong and lanceolate.
 Female 625 μ long *potschefstroomensis*
 (S. Africa in straw.) Ryke 1958
 Dorsal setae smaller and tapering 2
2. Dorsal shield medially with shallow
 punctures, ventral shields also
 pitted. Female 485 μ long *signata* Hull 1918
 (England; with *Lasius flavus*.)
 Dorsal shield smooth 3
3. All ventral shields smooth and
 shining 4
 At least the perigenital shield
 punctate 5
4. Length of female 570 μ *philoctena* (Trouest. 1902)
 (England, Ireland, Europe, with
 Lasius spp. and *Messor*
 destructor.)
 Length of female 812 μ *nitida* sp. nov.
 (Australia, with larva of *Myrmecia*
 gulosa.)
5. Ventral shields punctate. Female
 750 μ long *ricasoliana* (Berl. 1889)
 (Europe and England with *Lasius*
 spp.)
 Ventral shields smooth and shining.
 Male 930 μ long *alophora* Berl. 1903
 (Luxemburg, in ants' nest.)

***Urodiscella nitida* sp. nov.**

Fig. 1, A-K

Type. Holotype female, from the collection of Dr. R. V. Southcott (No. ACA 484) from the larva of *Myrmecia gulosa* Fabr. (No. A 257) and collected at Carlton, N.S.W., 15th July, 1958 (coll. D. Miller).

The specimen presented to the South Australian Museum by Dr. Southcott has been dissected, one slide containing the gnathosoma, chelicerae and legs I, the other the remainder of the body.

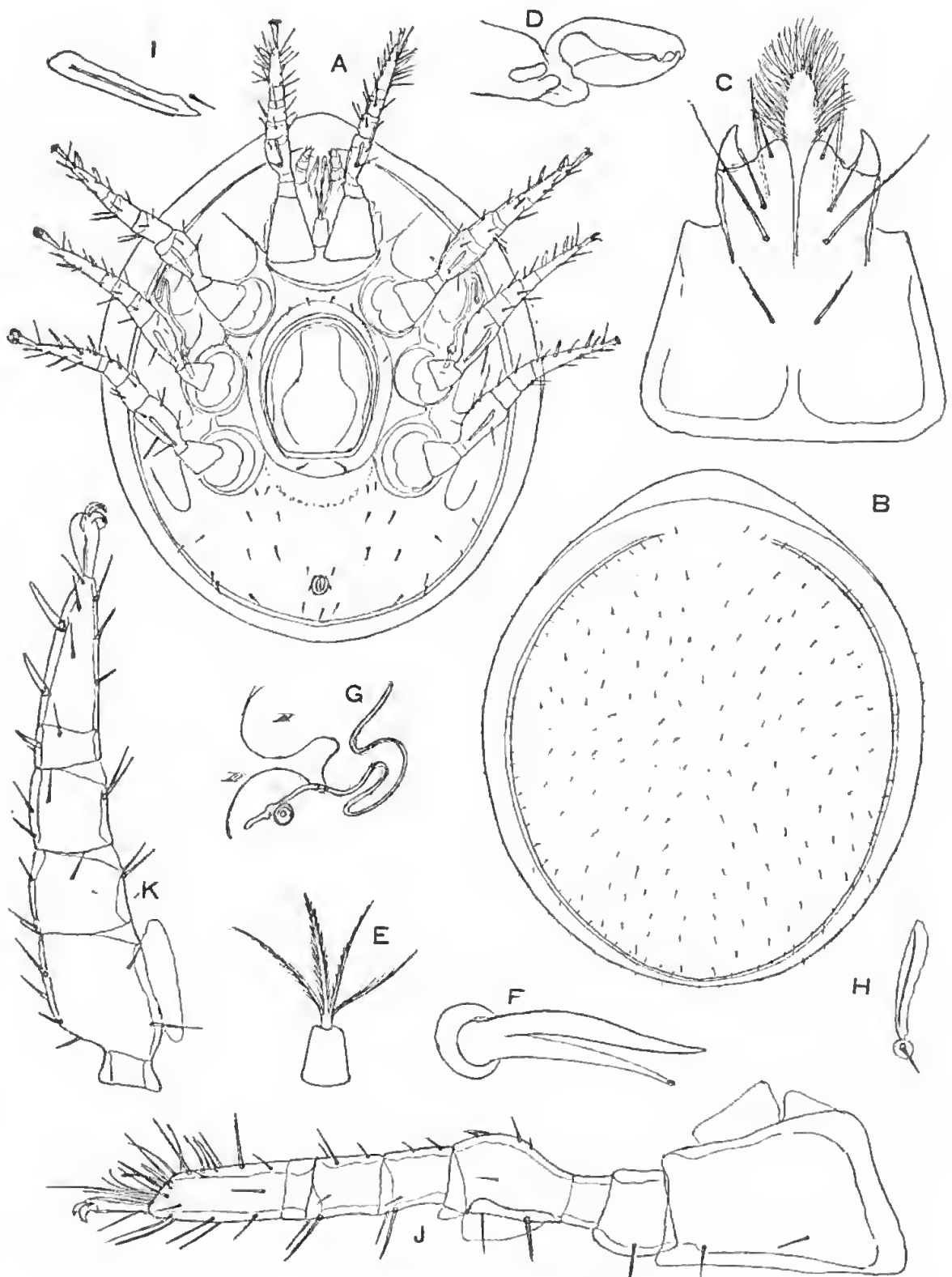
Description of Female. A broadly ovate almost rounded, dark brown convex species. Length of idiosoma 812μ , width 660μ .

Dorsum. The dorsal shield smooth and shining, with many minute fine setae; similar setae on the marginal shields. The marginal shields contour the dorsal shield and are entirely separated by a narrow strip of cuticle except anteriorly where they unite and are fused with the dorsal shield (fig. B).

Venter. As shown in fig. A. All shields smooth. All setae small and simple. An anterior pair of sternal setae (shown by Ryke for *potschefstroomensis*) cannot be seen and the four setae in a transverse row shown by Ryke as being on the anterior of the perigenital shield appear to be on the sternal shield (see fig. A); the perigenital shield otherwise has only two pairs of setae, one situated between coxae II and III, and the other pair at the posterior end; the margin of the perigenital shield is simple except in the region of coxae II where under high magnification it is seen to be finely crenulate. The genital shield is oval with truncate base; it is 232μ long by 166μ wide and extends from the middle of coxae IV to the middle of coxae II. The ventrianal shield bears approximately eleven pairs of setae besides the paranal and postanal setae, the paranals being placed well behind the anus. The leg grooves and exopodal shields are as shown. The peritreme is strongly folded (fig. G) with the stigma situated opposite coxae III and extending a short distance posterior of the stigma. The tritosternum is as shown (fig. E) with four laciniae.

Gnathosoma. The hypostome (fig. C) bears the usual four pairs of setae of which at least the posterior two pairs are ciliated or serrated; the second pair is much the longest. The labial cornicles are as figured, short and stout. The tectum is similar to that described and figured by Ryke for *potschefstroomensis*. The tined seta of the palpal tarsus is 2-tined (fig. F); the palpal tarsus bears two moderately long serrated setae. Chelicerae short and stout, each finger with one tooth (fig. D).

Legs. Coxae of leg I with outer laminae or crests as figured, at the base of which is a seta (fig. J and H); femora of other legs all with similar crests or laminae. Ambulacra of all legs well developed



Urodiscella nitida sp. nov. Female. A. Ventral view. B. Dorsum. C. Gnathosoma. D. Chelicerae. E. Tritosternum. F. Tined seta of palpal tarsus. G. Stigma and peritreme. H. Crest of femur I. I. Crest of femur IV. J. Leg I. K. Leg IV.

with long pretarsi, and paired claws. Legs I rather more slender than the others, to 464μ long, II and III 370μ long, IV 394μ long, some of the tarsal setae on legs II-IV strongly spinelike.

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